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ITALIAN IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES

1901-4

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New York

At this time Italian immigration has reached the highest point yet attained, and perhaps to be attained in the future.

The Italians, who until 1879 had contributed but a meager part to the mass of energy which immigration represents, since that year, have gone on giving an element more and more relevant to the general body of immigration. In the last three years they have taken the lead among the diverse nationalities of the Old World which furnished men to this, the younger nation of the New World. This is shown in the following table, which indicates, by decades, the proportion of the Italian element to the entire immigration into the United States:

TABLE I

Decades	Total	Yearly Average	Percentage
1821-30	408	41	0.25
1831-40	2,258	226	0.37
1841-50	1,870	167	0.09
1851-60	9,231	923	0.17
1861-70	11,728	1,173	0.50
1871-80	55,759	5,576	1.98
1881-90	307,309	30,731	5.85
1891-1900	655,668	65,567	17.05
1901-4	741,986	185,496	27.86
1821-1904	1,786,217		

The increase of Italian immigration into the United States, rather than depending upon the general increase of the emigration from Italy, is the effect of a change of direction of the mass of Italian immigrants, as is shown in the next table, which gives the percentage represented by the Italian emigration to the United States as compared with the entire emigration from Italy:

TABLE II

Year	Per Cent.
1891.....	23.46
1892.....	37.00
1893.....	35.25
1894.....	28.34
1895.....	20.56
1896.....	27.28
1897.....	27.01
1898.....	40.74
1899.....	44.14
1900.....	48.73
1901.....	40.12
1902.....	61.20
1903.....	61.91
1904.....	67.28

As is clearly seen from these figures, it is only during the last few years that the Italians represent a large percentage of general immigration into the United States. This fact is accounted for, in part if not entirely, by the diminution of prosperity in the South American republics, where, because of the greater similarity of climate, and race, customs, and language, the Italians have always preferred to emigrate.¹ For some time, however, the South American labor markets have been traversing periods of depression, which at present show no signs of disappearing; and consequently they have had, and still have, an immediate and strong repercussion upon the human current which flows in that direction. Moreover, the Italian emigration, which was formerly subventioned and encouraged by the Brazilian government, has been restrained by the Italian authorities because of the insufficiency of legislation in Brazil for the protection of the Italian laborers, who were unable to exact the payment of their wages from the masters of the haciendas, to the plowing and cultivation of which they devoted their labor. Recently, however, a remedial law has been approved by the Brazilian parliament, and

¹ It is a well-known fact that in the Argentine Republic and contiguous states, and to a certain extent in Brazil, the Italians represent the predominating factor of the foreign population, and in these countries, especially the first-named, they have succeeded in imprinting their own national character upon many of the social manifestations of these communities.

it is probable that in a short time the Italian government will withdraw its opposition, and that Brazil will again take up the work of encouraging Italian immigration. In such event, the immigratory current toward the United States will undergo a certain change, and necessarily diminish. It may be foreseen, therefore, that the succeeding years will bring into the United States a progressively decreasing number of Italians. Nevertheless, even in view of these facts, it will be of interest to study in detail the present immigration into the United States. The analysis of this immigratory current will form a basis for a true conception by American public opinion of its greater or less desirability, and, by showing its component parts and its distribution over the areas of the United States, will indicate what is necessary to be done, either by private enterprise or by the government, to utilize the qualities and energies which it brings into the country.

For the sake of brevity, and also because it is only in recent years that Italian immigration has assumed important proportions, the four years 1901-4 have been selected for the purposes of this study. It is thought that this limitation will not be prejudicial to a general conception of the entire Italian immigration, as in the preceding years it was composed of similar elements.

According to the statistics compiled by the Bureau of Immigration, the entire Italian immigration, from the point of view of its derivation, has been divided, in the last three years, as follows :

TABLE III

Year	Northern Italy	Southern Italy	Total	Per Cent. of Southern Italians
1901	22,103	115,704	137,807	83.23
1902	27,620	152,915	180,535	84.70
1903	37,429	196,117	233,546	83.97
1904	36,699	159,329	196,028	81.28

It is southern Italy, then, which furnishes the greater number of immigrants. The southern element represents more than 80 per cent. of the total. This fact is explained by the geographical position of Italy. While the exuberance of the northern

Italian population can overflow toward the north of Europe, in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria, the overplus of southern Italians has only the North African coast and the Americas. To Africa, and especially Tripoli, where they have founded flourishing agricultural colonies, the Sicilians from the southern and eastern part of their island direct their steps, while to America, North and South, turn those who come from the territory south of Tuscany, to the extreme point of Calabria and the northern part of Sicily. In this portion of Italy clusters a closely packed population which presents an average density to the square kilometer sometimes superior to the average density of the whole of Italy (113). This mass of people, generally very prolific, has no industries, its only source of production being agriculture, which in these last decades has suffered severe crises, one more violent than the other, principally those which have affected the sale of wine and oranges.

Submerged in their proliferation, impoverished by the decline of agriculture, and discouraged by the unjust distribution of taxes between the north and the south, to these people emigration offers the only relief, and they desert the land which produces in abundance the good things of the earth, for which there is little demand, and at first temporarily, but afterward permanently, abandon their native country to establish themselves in others where they find conditions sufficient for their maintenance.

The emigration from the southern provinces of Italy is destined to continue until the general conditions are changed, or until a diminution of the birth-rate establishes equilibrium between production and population. As neither of these solutions is probable before a period yet remote, emigration must necessarily remain a permanent feature for a long time to come, and, what is more important—a point which the reader should note particularly—it must assume more and more the character of definitive emigration to the countries where these people have found means to live and prosper. From this it will readily be seen that the cry of danger, which many Americans still repeat, is without foundation in fact. That the accusation, so readily made against the Italians, that they come here only for a time, and return to their

home country with their accumulated gains, has no substantial basis, is well established by the American consul at Naples in his reports, which state that, if the southern Italian emigrant returns once, or even a second time, to Italy, he finally gives up repatriation, and, together with his wife and family, goes back to the United States with the firm idea of remaining there permanently.

Such conclusion is favored also by the consideration of two other series of data, which indirectly re-confirm it: (1) the number of immigrants who have been in the United States before, and (2) the number of those leaving to return to Mediterranean ports. The following table is an extract from the figures gathered by the Bureau of Immigration:

TABLE IV
IMMIGRANTS WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE UNITED STATES BEFORE

Year	Northern Italians	Southern Italians	Total
1901	3,017	11,524	14,524
1902	3,475	11,829	15,304
1903	4,452	12,619	17,071
1904	5,163	14,870	20,033

Of 741,986 who came to the United States during the four years, 66,932 had been here before. They had therefore decided not to repeat the experiment of repatriation.

Before giving the figures collected for (2) it must be noted that they were furnished by the reports of the conferences of the different transportation companies which serve between the ports of the United States and the Mediterranean, from the agents of the *Compañía Transatlántica* of Barcelona and the *Compagnie Transatlantique Française*; and, also, that these data include not only Italians, but all third-class passengers for Mediterranean ports and Havre. How many among these may be Italians is difficult to determine, but, considering that these companies touch not only at Italian ports, but also at French and Spanish, and remembering that eastern and southern Europeans return generally by way of Italy, and Belgians by way of Havre, it cannot be far from the truth, after deducting 15 per cent. from the com-

panies figures, to consider the balance as the approximate number of Italians who during the three years have left the United States. Proceeding in such manner, we have the following table, in which the calendar and not the fiscal year is used :²

TABLE V

Year	Italians Sailed from the United States	Italians Arrived
1901.....	32,266	143,071
1902.....	48,684	201,260
1903.....	83,333	235,088
Total.....	164,283	579,419

The number of Italians, then, who left the United States in the three years represents, as the largest approximate number, a little more than one-fourth of the total number arrived in the same period.

Uniting the data derived from the last two tables with the general considerations, it may be seen that Italian immigration is not temporary in character, but a permanent contribution to the American population. Observation and knowledge of general conditions in those regions of Italy whence flows the stream of immigration into the United States, as well as into the other parts of the globe toward which the Italians direct their emigration, strengthen the opinion already expressed. It is certain that among the enormous mass of Italians arrived and arriving in this

² From the official publications of the Italian government for the calendar years 1902 and 1903 we have the following data in regard to the passengers arrived at the ports of Naples and Genoa from the United States :

	1902	1903
Arrived at Genoa.....	7,859	5,571
Arrived at Naples	44,357	72,662
	52,216	78,233

These figures include all passengers landed in Italy, either Italians or foreigners. The totals are different from those derived from the calculation made upon the figures supplied by the navigation companies, but they only tend to confirm our conclusion in regard to the small number of Italian immigrants in the United States who go back to Italy.

land there are some who, temperamentally unadapted to struggle in new climatic and social conditions, or already too advanced in life to take root in a new soil, prefer to finish their life where it began, and decide to return to Italy. Apart from the fact that this phenomenon is common to all immigratory currents, it should be considered a fortunate circumstance, and not a cause of contempt for Italians, since of all who come here, only those remain permanently who are more adapted to be absorbed in the new environment, and such represent the very large majority of Italian immigrants.

An analysis of Italian immigration in respect to sex gives the following results :

TABLE VI

YEAR	NORTHERN ITALIANS		SOUTHERN ITALIANS		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1901.	17,852	4,251	90,395	25,309	108,247	29,560
1902.	22,425	5,195	124,536	28,379	146,961	33,574
1903.	30,477	6,952	158,939	37,178	189,416	44,130
1904.	28,784	7,915	122,770	36,559	155,554	44,474

A glance at these figures is sufficient to perceive the large preponderance of males. To bring out this fact more clearly, a table showing the percentage of females in the total number of immigrants coming from the north and south is here appended :

TABLE VII

Year	North	South	Total
1901.	19.23	21.87	21.44
1902.	18.20	18.55	18.59
1903.	18.57	18.95	18.03
1904.	21.56	23.00	22.68

Among immigrants from the north as well as among those from the south we find the males in the same large proportion, which proves the strength of the Italian immigration, in that it consists almost entirely of individuals who must work for their living, and not of women, who, to a certain extent, must depend

upon others. This is explained by the work they are called to perform—a kind of work where the presence of women would be a hindrance and not an aid. The Italian women belonging to this class, should they come in large numbers, would be unable to find work, and would be obliged to depend upon the men, who, employed as day laborers and paid small wages, would find it difficult to maintain families, which in America requires large means.

The vigor of Italian immigration is further demonstrated by the abundance of individuals between the ages of fifteen and forty-five. The figures are given in the table below:

TABLE VIII

YEARS	NORTHERN ITALIANS		SOUTHERN ITALIANS		TOTAL	
	Under 14 Years	45 Years and Over	Under 14 Years	45 Years and Over	Under 14 Years	45 Years and Over
1901.....	1,830	1,117	14,794	9,593	17,624	10,710
1902.....	2,215	1,376	16,954	12,216	19,169	13,692
1903.....	3,404	1,419	21,619	9,837	25,023	11,256
1904.....	3,633	1,537	20,895	9,443	24,528	10,980

PERCENTAGE

1901.....	8.22	5.05	13.64	8.29	12.79	7.71
1902.....	8.01	4.98	11.08	7.98	10.61	7.52
1903.....	9.09	3.79	11.02	5.00	10.71	4.00
1904.....	9.89	4.18	13.11	5.92	12.51	5.60

Referring to the above tables, it can be seen that the number of boys and old men does not surpass 20 per cent. of the entire immigration, except in the year 1901, and then but slightly. The great majority, then, is composed not only of individuals who can procure directly the means of subsistence, but of young men who are physically capable of working immediately upon landing.

The physical integrity of Italian immigration is also shown by the negligible number refused access to the United States by the immigration authorities at the ports. The small number deported, besides proving the florid health of the Italian immigrants, shows also the infinitely few excluded for political, economical, or moral

reasons. The figures below demonstrate the exactness of these observations:

TABLE IX
NUMBER OF DEBARRED

Cause of Rejection	1901			1902			1903			1904		
	North	South	Total	North	South	Total	North	South	Total	North	South	Total
Idiots.....	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	4
Insane.....	..	4	4	..	5	5	..	8	8	1	8	9
Paupers.....	51	1292	1343	51	2049	2100	160	2164	2324	141	1396	1537
Dangerously ill..	10	30	40	..	7	7	9	147	156	35	235	270
Convicts.....	..	2	2	..	..	..	3	46	49	..	25	25
Prostitutes.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
Contract laborers	67	125	192	11	100	111	71	447	518	83	425	508
Total.....	128	1455	1583	78	2235	2313	243	2813	3056	261	2092	2353

To bring out more clearly the extremely small number refused access, the percentage of the total number of immigrants is here given:

TABLE X
PERCENTAGE OF THE DEBARRED IN TOTAL ITALIAN IMMIGRATION

Year	Northern Italians	Southern Italians	Total
1901.....	0.57	1.25	1.14
1902.....	0.28	1.36	1.28
1903.....	0.60	1.43	1.30
1904.....	0.71	1.31	1.20

As is shown, the number of deported does not exceed 1.3 per cent. of the total number of immigrants. This is the result of severe legislative action in Italy, which forbids emigration to all persons comprised in the categories excluded by the American laws. The Italian government has established special offices at every port of departure to enforce the laws of emigration. Another safeguard is the inspection by the salaried physicians attached to the American consulates in Italy. These physicians, with the acquiescence of the Italian authorities, and furnished with the permission of the navigation companies, inspect one by one all the departing emigrants, and prevent those from leaving

who, according to their opinion, would not be allowed to land in America. Thus it is seen that, by the Italian government's work, all elements which could menace law and order in the United States are removed from the emigratory stream, while the consular physicians see to it that it is freed from those individuals who might imperil the public health. The insignificant number refused access by the United States authorities is composed of the few who at times succeed, owing to the enormous number embarking, in eluding the vigilance of the Italian authorities and the inspection of the consular physicians.

The preceding data therefore authorize the statement that the Italian immigration into the United States is vigorous and desirable from the physical point of view, and pure and healthy from the moral point of view.

The question of education now presents itself. Analytical investigation of the Italian immigration from this point of view gives the following results:

TABLE XI

YEAR	ILLITERATES OVER FOURTEEN YEARS			PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERATES IN TOTAL IMMIGRATION		
	Northern Italians	Southern Italians	Total	Northern	Southern	Total
1901.	3,122	58,493	61,615	14.12	50.55	45.44
1902.	3,556	76,529	80,085	12.87	50.00	44.35
1903.	4,283	84,512	88,795	11.45	43.09	38.01
1904.	4,150	74,889	75,039	11.31	47.00	40.32

The progressive improvement in regard to primary instruction is evident. The year 1901 shows a proportion of over 45 per cent. of illiteracy; the year 1904, about 40 per cent. Nevertheless, illiteracy remains a characteristic disadvantage of the Italian immigrants, especially those from southern Italy. The difference of intellectual conditions between the north and south of Italy is the result of long years of misgovernment and neglect in the provinces of southern Italy. Although in these provinces, as well as in the whole of Italy, the law of compulsory elementary education is now in force, yet complex circumstances, among which

may be named low financial conditions and lack of administration in the communes, have hindered the southern populations from enjoying the fruit of legislative action in the same proportion as the northern populations have been able to do. Healthier economic conditions, the communes administered by more modern classes than the governing officials in the south, have, in a little more than forty years of national life, almost obliterated the plague spot of illiteracy in the northern parts of Italy. Illiteracy must diminish, as in fact it has always diminished, among the immigrants; but it remains in relatively large proportion because improvement in this respect is necessarily slow. The question arises then: Is the illiteracy of the Italian immigrants a menace to those countries—especially the United States—to which they betake themselves?

Many writers upon immigration have given this question first place when speaking of the greater or less desirability of the same, but a closer view of the subject cannot but disclose the exaggeration of those who maintain that a heavy percentage of illiteracy is a grave peril for the United States. In the first place, illiteracy is not a new fact, nor can it be affirmed to be a characteristic of Italian immigration alone, because we ignore the number of illiterates in the great immigratory currents which in the past fifty years have inundated this country. Only during the last few years has it become a feature of immigration statistics to take note of illiteracy. Given the relative recency of the acceptance of the principle of compulsory popular education in European states, and keeping in mind the origin of the Irish and German immigrants (who formed the bulk of the immigration into the United States in the past), coming, as they did, from the least developed regions of their respective countries, it is not difficult to believe that the proportion of illiterates was, if not equal, at least little inferior, to that which the Italian immigration actually presents. As is well known, the Irish and Germans become elements of force and prosperity in the new country in which they settled. What, then, are the criteria for judging the desirability of immigrants? First, the possibility of utilizing the qualities of the new-

comers, and, second, the facility of absorption, with the loss of the distinctive character of their national origin.

When the Italian may be utilized in the development of the country's mines, the culture of its lands, and the embellishment of its cities, his grammatical attainments in his own language may well be a negligible quantity. A country in its period of development has need of brawn as well as brain, and the vigor of the Italian as a laborer cannot be placed in doubt; and, therefore, considered in the light of the first criterion for judgment, the Italian immigration cannot be held to be undesirable.

In regard to the facility of absorption, illiteracy should be an advantage in the work of Americanizing newcomers. The individual who cannot read brings fewer impressions and ideas from his native country than one who has been able through education to observe the movements in which he was born and bred. The illiterate man, in some respects, and especially if he comes from the rural regions, is more like a child. While deficient in past impressions, he has an intellectual freshness and curiosity. His adaptability to a new environment, therefore, will be accomplished more rapidly and with greater ease, like that of a child's. Moreover, instruction does not necessarily include the idea of intelligence, and when the observations made upon the physical force and vigor of the Italians are joined to those made upon their intellectual brightness (Italians of southern Italy are noted for their quickness of perception and other strong mental qualities), one is forced to the conclusion that the percentage of illiteracy among the Italians cannot constitute a peril for the United States, and, further, that this defect may even become an aid to the work of assimilation.

Instead of meditating exclusion for the illiterate immigrant, it would be much more logical and just to add to the conditions demanded for obtaining citizenship the obligation, not only of stammering a few English words, but of speaking and writing English. In such manner the intellectual youth of the illiterate immigrant would come to be exploited effectively for the advancement of his Americanization. Apart from this, however, it is use-

ful to note that the illiteracy existing among the immigrants is reduced only in small proportion among their children. The census of 1900 establishes this fact. On the other hand, the same census shows that the children of new immigrants manifest greater diligence in study, and greater profit from it, than do the children of parents born in America. Seventy-five per cent. of the first-mentioned class, and 65 per cent. of the second, frequented the schools. Of 30,404,762 persons of ten years and over, born of American parents, 1,737,803, or 5.7 per cent., were illiterates; while of 10,958,803 persons born of foreign parents, only 179,384, or 1:67 per cent., were in the same condition. It is necessary only to cite, in regard to Italian immigration, the deductions made by Mr. R. P. Falkner with respect to all immigration from southern Italy: "From the foregoing analysis it should, I think, be clear that the evidence of a declining average of intelligence and capacity, which has been alleged to characterize recent immigration, is just as inconclusive as that brought forward to show an increasing volume."

The usefulness of a body of immigration, as has been pointed out before, can be judged only by the mass of capacities it brings into countries, and the relation of the same to the work demanded by the country's needs. As an immigration of learned people into an undeveloped country could be a detriment rather than an advantage to its interests, so an immigration of laborers into a country already well provided in that respect might be held to be perilous for its economic and social order.

Taking up this part of the subject, it is necessary to ascertain what kind of work the Italians know how to do, and what productive capacities they possess; and from this can be seen in what numbers they may be utilized in the United States.

The following table shows the three larger categories of Italian immigration constituted of farmers, farm laborers, and laborers:

TABLE XII

	1901			1902		
	North	South	Total	North	South	Total
Farmers	23	7	30	9	140	149
Farm laborers.....	311	26,566	29,877	6,455	39,128	45,583
Laborers	8,735	43,210	51,945	10,143	38,396	68,539
Total	12,069	69,783	81,852	16,607	97,664	114,271

	1903			1904		
	North	South	Total	North	South	Total
Farmers	200	678	878	260	269	529
Farm laborers.	6,462	32,391	38,853	5,154	42,471	47,625
Laborers	15,622	85,682	101,304	13,526	42,502	56,028
Total	22,284	118,751	141,035	19,940	85,242	104,102

All of this part of the immigration originates in the rural districts of Italy; even those classified by the Bureau of Immigration as laborers are in fact peasants. The enormous majority comes from the south, and, as is shown by the statistics published by the Italian government, the urban population in general, and that of the south in particular, does not emigrate except in very small proportion. It is misleading to consider the laborers as distinct from the farm laborers; actually they form but one class, and, with the tillers of the soil, represent the total agricultural element. They constitute more than one-half of the entire immigration, and, as the gross figures do not bring out clearly the characteristic note of the observation, it can be seen by the percentage table below:

TABLE XIII

PERCENTAGE OF THE AGRICULTURAL ELEMENTS IN TOTAL ITALIAN IMMIGRATION

Year	Northern Italians	Southern Italians	Total
1901.....	54.60	60.21	59.39
1902.....	60.12	63.86	63.29
1903.....	61.14	60.55	60.38
1904.....	51.60	53.50	53.14

In the three years under consideration — except the first — the urban population, made up of skilled workmen and professionals, represents less than 40 per cent.; the remainder consists of farm laborers more or less skilled in the art of agriculture. Thus it is readily seen that the Italians in large majority should find their way to the fields of agriculture, the ground adapted to the development of their activities. There they would find the greatest advantage with the least proportionate sacrifice, and at the same time would be able to contribute most effectively to the increasing productivity and wealth of the United States.

Before observing the actual direction taken by the Italians once disembarked, it is well to note what capital, in addition to their personnel, they bring with them. This investigation gives the following results:

TABLE XIV

Year	Amount of Money Shown by the Italian Immigrants	Average per Capita
1901.....	\$1,523,284	\$12.67
1902.....	3,018,641	14.47
1903.....	2,123,625	13.09
1904.....	3,100,664	20.00

The figures reported show a progressive improvement in the amount of money brought by the Italians. These figures, it must be observed, cannot be considered exact, because the Italian peasant in general, and the southern Italian in particular, is diffident toward strangers and obstinate in refusing to make known his personal affairs, and still more so when it is a question of money in his possession. It can well be imagined, then, that a large number of immigrants have kept hidden the exact amount of money they possessed; so much the more so owing to the widespread opinion among them that \$10 is a sufficient sum to own up to at the port in order to obtain admittance into the country.

Allowing for this, however, it is but just to say that the Italian immigration is composed principally of poor people in the strictest sense of the word — people who have not enough money to pay transportation expenses from the ports of disembarkation, and who must find work immediately upon disembarking.

Having examined in detail the ethnic and demographic composition of the Italian immigration, and having seen the conditions, physical, economic, social, and financial, which it presents, it remains to study the direction taken by the immigrants toward the different parts of the country. The figures below indicate the percentage of Italian immigrants who have directed their steps toward the different geographic divisions of the United States, according to the origin of the immigrants, during the four years under consideration :

TABLE XV

	NORTHERN ITALIANS				SOUTHERN ITALIANS				TOTAL			
	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1864
North Atlan. Div.	61	28	59	56	88	86	86	85	83	82	82	80
North Centr. Div.	16	18	18	17	6	8	8	8	7	9	10	10
South Atlan. Div.	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	2
South Centr. Div.	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Western Division	20	21	20	20	2	2	1	1	5	5	4	5
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The percentages are referred to as approximative, exact figures not being necessary to show the objective points.

By these data it is seen that the northern states of the Union absorb more than 90 per cent. of the Italian immigration, less a small fraction from the north of Italy, which goes to the western states. The great majority of the Italians remain in the vicinity of the ports of disembarkation; and even those who travel west, instead of dispersing in the eleven states and territories which form that division, concentrate mostly in California, which fact is set forth in the following figures :

TABLE XVI

PERCENTAGE OF NORTHERN ITALIANS DIRECTED TO CALIFORNIA OF ALL
NORTHERN ITALIANS WEST-BOUND

1901.....	63.14
1902.....	64.95
1903.....	70.76
1904.....	72.61

Neglecting to consider this tendency of a part of the northern Italian immigrants to concentrate in California, precisely the most populous point of the Western Division, it is well to return to the principal deductions to be made from Table XV; i. e., the enormous prevalence of Italians in the states of the North Atlantic and North Central Divisions. The figures below set forth that in these divisions the great majority of the Italians are concentrated in a few states :

TABLE XVII
NORTH ATLANTIC DIVISION

	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1904
New York.....	50.44	46.17	42.91	44.28	60.57	60.68	53.82	56.11	59.37	59.10	53.09	54.45
Pennsylvania.....	30.87	30.15	33.87	31.96	20.58	24.79	25.31	22.29	21.78	21.37	26.30	23.50
New Jersey.....	5.00	6.84	5.22	5.17	5.79	3.47	5.91	7.76	5.70	5.70	5.83	7.44
Massachusetts.....	8.64	9.43	10.13	10.46	7.25	9.00	7.41	8.03	7.41	7.41	8.32	8.61
Connecticut.....	32	6.13	5.63	6.46	3.67	3.38	3.34	3.47	3.34	3.34	3.95	3.86

NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION

	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1904	1901	1902	1903	1904
Illinois.....	39.53	47.56	47.75	43.20	50.16	45.99	41.61	39.89	42.69	46.48	43.41	4,099
Michigan.....	25.62	21.14	18.25	12.51	8.32	7.16	9.85	7.26	14.36	11.50	12.27	895
Ohio.....	6.05	7.49	7.57	9.92	26.74	34.50	33.67	35.47	19.52	26.11	26.06	2,646

The data are wanting for showing what centers of population in the states considered become the final destination of the immigrants, or in what proportions they are scattered in the different parts of these states. It can be assumed, however, that the mass of Italians cannot spread in the farming lands, since these farms are already occupied, and it may be affirmed that the immigrants go to augment the population of the cities, and principally the large cities. This idea is favored by common observation, by the census of 1900, and by the conclusions of Dr. Tosti in his study of the Italian population of New York state. According to the census of 1900, 62.4 per cent. of the Italians established in the United States were settled in centers whose population was greater than 25,000. According to Dr. Tosti, who secured data up to December, 1903, of 486,175 Italians resident in New York state, 382,775, or 78.7 per cent., were established in New York city.

The conclusion, then, from the figures reported is that more

than 80 per cent. of the Italians settle in the states of the northern divisions, and that from 75 per cent. to 85 per cent. of these concentrate in the large cities. Remembering now the arts and trades of the Italians, as established by the data given previously, it is seen that, while more than 60 per cent. of them are peasants and farmers, instead of going to the agricultural districts, they come to increase the urban populations of the United States.

The concentration of the Italians in the large cities is as detrimental to themselves as it is to the United States. The peasant who establishes himself in a large American city cannot be anything but a laborer; all of his technical qualities are lost both to himself and to the country which harbors him. The Italian peasant, who has had centuries of experience in tilling the land, who understands all kinds of cultivation, who is not only expert in viniculture, but also in the culture of all the vegetables and fruits of his new country, is giving but the minimum part of his productive habits, i. e., his physical force.

The evils of concentration do not consist only in this dispersion of energy, or rather this mistaken employment of forces; they are not only economic evils, but they extend also to the moral and political fields. In fact, the Italian immigrant as a laborer, alternating only between stone-breaking and ditching, remains an alien to the country. The immigrant, to whatever nationality he may belong, does not feel himself a part of the collectivity as long as no ties, first economic, then moral, are formed to attach him to the new soil. The laborer cannot form these ties while he remains a machine, pure and simple, furnishing only brute force, and no special interest can be felt in the work he accomplishes. Thus the Italian immigrant, thrust into the large cities, surrounded and outclassed by those who do not understand him and whom he does not understand, shuts himself in with his fellow-countrymen and remains indifferent to all that happens outside of the quarters inhabited by them. Although renouncing the idea of repatriation, because he knows the economic conditions in his own country forbid, and becoming an American citizen, he remains always a stranger to the new country.

The crowding into the large American cities brings other

harmful effects. The cost of living in the northern states, and especially in the large centers, is very high, while the wages, on account of the greater competition, are relatively low. This lack of equilibrium imposes upon the Italian large material sacrifices which deplete him physically and lower him socially. The high rents force him to live in the worst quarters and in restricted space. In the Italian quarters of New York and Philadelphia can be seen the alleged lodging-houses, with seven or eight or even ten persons occupying one bedroom. Families of seven or more members crowd into houses containing only two rooms, one of which is the kitchen. This mode of existence, apart from the fact that it is fruitful in the development and extension of infectious diseases, renders the people vile in their personal habits, and, as has been alluded to before, makes them appear repulsive to the Americans. If these material conditions influence the Italians to feel no sincere or profound attachment to the adopted country, on the other hand they influence the native American to disdain the newcomers, thus causing a reciprocal psychologic state of mind which is a powerful obstacle in the way of assimilation.

But the influence of this agglomeration of the Italians goes still farther, for, besides the evils already spoken of, it furnishes an effective stimulus for the development and deepening of moral corruption. Among Italian immigrants, as among all others, there are certain elements which belong to no class, having lived the life of all, with no trade or capacity for honest work of any kind. Such people have no moral curb or scruple, and prey upon the others. They find in the swarming Italian quarters of the large American cities fruitful fields in which to exercise their baneful powers for the despoliation of their countrymen, who, ignorant and ingenuous, become their ready victims. In the guise of agents, solicitors, or journalists, they extort money. As founders of gambling dens and houses of ill-fame, they organize schemes of blackmail and other crimes. It is among these people that the ward politicians find their agents. The existence of people like these depends upon the crowded conditions referred to. The number of such individuals is not large, but they are

indefatigable propagators of corruption among the immigrants.

Thus are conditions formed which, while placing obstacles in the way of reciprocal advantage, ruin the Italian immigrant morally, materially, and physically.

It is not the large number of Italian immigrants which constitutes a peril for the United States. The immigrants are young, honest, strong, and overflowing with energy; they possess potentially all the factors to represent an increase of development of the American people. The real danger is their concentration in the large cities, their defective distribution in the territory of the republic, which renders impossible their proper utilization, and forms an ever-increasing plethora of labor in the more populous states, while at other points there is a large and unsatisfied need of laboring-men.

The problem is not, as some are inclined to think, to find means for limiting or stopping the immigratory current, but to avoid the evils of concentration, and to find a way effectually to distribute the mass of immigration.

What causes provoke the concentration of Italians in the large cities? Why is it that these peasants prefer to live in crowded centers, rather than to scatter over the country, where they would be able to continue the art of agriculture and find the most appropriate outlet for their energies? Looking for the causes of this phenomenon will aid powerfully to solve the problem, and a brief survey of present and former conditions reveals the two principal causes: (*a*) the poverty of the Italian immigrants; (*b*) their previous mode of existence.

As has been demonstrated, the average amount of capital of the newcomer is a sum which, at the most, enables him to live without work ten or twelve days. If work be not found in that limited period, he must turn for help to his countrymen or to public charity. He has no time—aside from all other difficulties encountered, such as ignorance of the language, difference in all the conditions of life, etc., etc.—to study the advantage or disadvantage of points in the United States where he might be able to develop his activities. Even if he knew before landing that the South or West was adapted to his needs, his lack of funds would

prevent his using that knowledge. Furthermore, the same lack of money forbids him to choose work in the fields, for, although better paid, it depends upon circumstances, which he has neither time nor money to command, and the fact that the land can be bought at a low price must be neglected, while he is glad to secure any kind of work which will provide for his present needs.

In addition to the economic causes, there is another, far more complex, because derived from habits of life which have obtained for centuries. The population of southern Italy is composed in great part of peasant farm laborers massed in large boroughs, which might be called cities, not for the perfection and complexity of their municipal and social life, but for their number of inhabitants. In order to live in these crowded haunts and mix with their fellows, the peasants walk morning and night several miles to and from the fields. They leave their homes long before dawn and return after sunset. This custom arose in feudal days, when the organization for public safety was deficient, and existed in those communities until the foundation of Italian unity, thus forming tendencies and psychological conditions in the peasant peculiar to him.

A study of the character of the southern Italians shows that they cannot live isolated; the conditions indicated above have formed in them the necessity of living in homogeneous groups, to reunite with their own kind. At the same time, they have acquired great diffidence toward the outside world of all who do not belong to the nucleus in which they were born and bred. Such tendencies, however, with the conditions which created them, are slowly passing away, but are yet strong enough to influence the deliberations of the individual, and especially in his choice of a mode of life.

This fear of isolation and this distrust of strangers become stronger and deeper in a new, strange country, and the peasant, although provided with money enough to buy and stock a small farm, finds in his own social needs a powerful obstacle to the realization of such a plan; but, joined with a sufficient number of his own countrymen in similar financial conditions, he does not hesitate to choose the farm.

These, then, are the principal reasons which account for the agglomeration of Italians in large cities. Suppressing them, the resulting evil will necessarily cease to exist.

The means best adapted to solving this problem would appear to be the formation of colonizing societies which should propose to found agricultural colonies composed of Italian peasants. It is well known that the greater part of the good arable land, once the property of the government, has been pre-empted, and has become the property of railroad companies and private individuals; but we are still far from the time in which all the good land will be under cultivation. Large areas await the hard and continued work of the laborer to be productive. As stated above, most of these lands belong to private corporations or individuals, and these should, in their own interests, favor the colonizing idea and aid in realizing it.

The work of the society would consist in locating the land, and in providing transportation, and other expenses incident to the placing of the laborer in working contact with the land. A fixed wage-rate might be advanced, or the peasant guaranteed the living of himself and family until such time as the land became productive. The ultimate aim of the colonizing society would be (*a*) to render the peasant proprietor of the land he has put under cultivation, or (*b*) to remain proprietor of the land and administer the agricultural plant it has established. In the second case, the society would pay the laborer wages, or rent the land, exacting a part of the harvest. The choice of either of these two plans should not prejudice the practicability of success. However, the first would appear to be better adapted to invoke the ready formation of colonies. Should the second plan be preferred, and the obligation to provide for the needs of the laborers and the land remain for a time, the peasants could be treated as tenants, and tenants with long leases, rather than as wage-earners; for only in this way could they be permanently established and attached to the land.

It is certain that such a society, organized to place Italian immigrants to the best advantage, would be able to reap large profits upon the capital invested. The Italian peasant, if not the

best, is one of the best cultivators of land in Europe. Despite the drawbacks existing for ages in his own country, he has shown heroic resistance, and has confronted misfortunes and persecutions before which many others would have sustained ultimate defeat. In spite of all the disadvantages of climatic conditions, and the varying qualities of land, lack of capital, and wise administration, ignorance of modern agricultural science and its inventions, he has known how to produce cultures of every kind. But in agricultural industry—different from many other forms of work—the most important factor of production is always the man. It is the capacity, the force, of the man that assures the success of a colonizing enterprise. In America, where he would find all the help he could not find in his own country, the Italian peasant would yield marvelous and remunerative results, if placed where he could prove his ability.

Now, as never before, the conditions are propitious for an experiment of this nature. After many trials the cultivation of the mulberry tree in the United States—without which the raising of the silk-worm would be impossible—is an assured fact. There are numerous plantations flourishing in several states, and it can be predicted that its culture will be universal in the South and West. Every Italian peasant understands the mulberry, and knows how to foster the silk-worm with its cocoon. In Italy, anywhere except in a very few provinces, the silk culture is undertaken, at some points being the only culture made, at others subsidiary. In the United States the Italian colonies could propose the extension and exploitation of this new fountain of riches, certain that it would repay largely, especially those who would initiate it. The United States imports all raw silk needed for its manufactories, which consume immense quantities. Such culture, aided by the experience of the Italians, would absolutely assure success.

The establishment of an Italian colonization society in the United States would be looked upon favorably in both countries. Every report of the commissioner of immigration exposes the perils of concentration and exhorts Congress to adopt special

precautions for a right distribution of the new immigration.³ It is certain that the government would give moral, if not material, support to such an undertaking. In Italy, attached to the ministry of foreign affairs, is a special bureau created for the purpose of protecting and advising emigrants to seek the countries most adapted to their needs. This bureau is more than ever convinced of the necessity of aiding the formation of agricultural colonies where the Italian emigrant would be able to secure conditions more favorable to his development and assimilation.

The two governments, therefore, the one indirectly and morally, the other directly and materially, would contribute to spur on the Italian immigrant toward the destination best adapted to him by his previous mode of living and by his special aptitude for tilling the soil.

³ See reports of the general commissioner of immigration for the years 1901-3 (Washington, D. C.).